Building skills for the future through experiential rural partnerships: Results from the RPLC project's capacity building evaluation

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BRANDON UNIVERSITY

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Land Acknowledgement

Mamaawii-atooshke aakihkiwiin
Working Together and Growing

We respect the treaties that were made on these lands and acknowledge that Brandon University is located on Treaty 2 Lands, the traditional homelands of the Dakota, Anishanabek, Oji-Cree, Cree, Dene and Metis peoples.

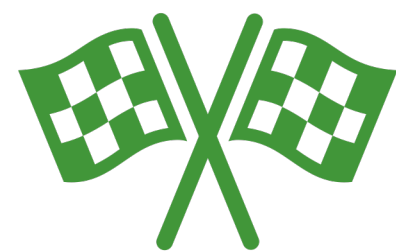Kelly & McNeely

Rural Policy Learning Commons (RPLC)

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Evaluation – Profile of Students

106 students were supported by RPLC in various roles

37

Respondents

To the finish! 76%
of students stay involved to
the end of the RPLC project
once they were engaged

RPLC STUDENT ROLES of those surveyed

Role	Count
Employment as Secretariat officer	6
Employment as Support (network/team/service)	18
Obtained a grant for a report/brief/summary	17
Obtained a grant for Research & Exchange	14
Obtained support for conference/event	22
RPLC Webinar Presenter	19
Contributed to RPLC Research Publication	9
ICRPS Participant	12
Attended RPLC event/conference	24
Attended RPLC Webinar	20

66% of student respondents had 3 or more roles

Evaluation – Student Survey Design

5pt Likert scale:

○ **Greatly Diminished**   ○ **Slightly Diminished**   ○ **No Impact**   ○ **Improved Slightly**   ○ **Improved Considerably**

Four major dimensions of the RPLC skill evaluation:

i. *Academic Skills*

ii. *Policy Skills*

iii. *Management Skills*

iv. *21st Century Skills*

Survey Results – Assessing Student Learning

Students reflected on the development of their skills in those 4 key areas which correspond with **Scholarship** and **Leadership**

- **Academic Skills** - writing articles, lit. reviews, policy briefs | collaborating with researchers and policy-makers

- **Policy Skills** - policy analysis, development & implementation | collaborating with community members

- **Management Skills** - time management, organizing events, interacting with the public, public speaking

- **21st Century Skills** - digital skills, information management, creative content, critical thinking, problem solving

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Academic Skills Survey Results

ACADEMIC SKILLS	greatly diminished	diminished	no change	improved slightly	improved considerably	N/A
Writing journal articles			12	11	5	6
Producing literature reviews			10	9	9	6
Writing reports and policy briefs			3	14	15	2
Designing surveys			14	9	2	9
Conducting interviews			11	6	12	4
Collecting and organizing data			12	7	12	3
Analyzing data			10	8	14	2
Collaborating with other researchers			0	6	27	1
Engaging with policy-makers			5	13	11	5
Organizing events			8	12	9	5
Communicating insights			2	14	16	2
Other (specify below)			0	0	2	7
Total number of answers			87	109	134	52
			22.8%	28.5%	35.1%	13.6%
				63.6%		

Policy Skills Survey Results

POLICY SKILLS	greatly diminished	diminished	no change	improved slightly	improved considerably	N/A
Analysis of policies			1	16	9	7
Implementation of policies			12	11	5	6
Analysis of institutions and policy processes			4	14	11	4
Analysis of local governments			2	19	7	6
Analysis of social and welfare policies			8	12	5	9
Working with local communities members			4	16	11	3
Negotiating with community partners			12	14	2	6
Others (specify below)			0	1	9	10
Total number of answers			43	103	59	51
			16.8%	40.2%	23.0%	19.9%
				63.2%		

Management Skills Survey Results

MANAGEMENT SKILLS	greatly diminished	diminished	no change	improved slightly	improved considerably	N/A
Managing your time			14	7	12	0
Organizing events			11	12	9	1
Relating to the public			9	17	7	0
Speaking to public audiences			5	16	11	1
Leading others			11	15	7	0
Other (specify below)			2	0	1	9
Total number of answers			52	67	47	11
			29.4%	37.9%	26.6%	6.2%
				64.5%		

21st Century Skills Survey Results

21st CENTURY SKILLS	No learning	improved slightly	improved considerably	N/A
	0	1	2	
Digital skills	3	13	13	3
Information management	3	17	12	1
Creative content production	7	13	12	1
Internet communication or collaboration	2	17	14	0
Problem solving	3	14	15	1
Critical thinking	2	15	15	1
Other (specify below)	1	0	0	9
Total number of answers	21	89	81	16
	10.1%	43.0%	39.1%	7.7%
		82.1%		

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Recognizing Student Learning

Students awarded Certificates in:

Scholarship – those students (7) that excelled in scholarship, contributing 2 or more instances to the development of content and knowledge in RPLC

Leadership – those students (14) that excelled in leadership, contributing to the running and success of RPLC over multiple years in the project

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RPLC
RURAL POLICY
LEARNING COMMONS

international Award

**GAINING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS
AND RURAL KNOWLEDGE**

**Excellence in Leadership,
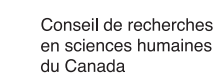Sustainability Contributing to the
Running and Success in RPLC**

Michael Blatherwick

Brandon University

4 years of Partnership
2015 - 2019

KOFI CAMPBELL
PROVOST & VICE-PRESIDENT (ACADEMIC)

WILLIAM ASHTON
PROJECT DIRECTOR

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

rdi RURAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Social Sciences and
Humanities Research
Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches
en sciences humaines
du Canada

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RPLC Certificates as Digital Badges

Designing options for Badges:

RDI

Designing a framework for Recognizing Learning and Achievements of RDI Team members

Exploring options to expand RDI job descriptions:

- Baseline job roles and responsibilities
- Incentives to be awarded badges based on demonstration of achievements and advancements in learning

Potential Badges:

- Scholarship; Project Management; Essential Skills; 21st Century Digital Skills

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RDI Digital Badges?

DRAFT ideas for Badges:

Potential for Recognizing Learning and Achievements of <u>RDI as an organization</u>

RDI undergoes an RPL Assessment Process

- Conducts an Internal self-assessment

- Develops an RDI portfolio with evidence of expertise and competence level in key areas, e.g.,

  - Rural policy development
  - Government, Regional & Community Engagement and Collaboration
  - Project Management – design and implementation
  - Rural Policy Sectors

- Engages in an External Validation

Goal: **Validation would provide a foundation for RDI to assess organizations and communities.**

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Challenges

- Who is qualified to recognize an Organization's competencies?
- What assessment methods are most applicable?
- RPL Assessment process can be time consuming and difficult to coordinate.
- ?

Opportunities

- Badges for Organizations advertise their successes
- Successes showcase collective strength/empowerment rather than highlighting individuals alone
- Recognizing the diversity of an organization's learning encourages involvement
- RPL process identifies Strengths as well as Deficits or Gaps needing learning to be better prepared for future projects
- Enhanced capacity reduces need for costly external consultants
- ?

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RDI

Any Questions or Comments?

Thank You/Merci

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